

Statement on the Tentative Agreement Between the United Auto Workers and General Motors

November 2, 1996

I congratulate and applaud the United Auto Workers and General Motors for putting in the intense effort and long hours that led to this tentative agreement. Their hard work and ultimate success are a tribute to our system of collective bargaining. They have proven once again that when labor and management work

together, they make our businesses, our working families, and our economy stronger. I am very hopeful that the tentative agreement will be ratified and that the outstanding local issues will quickly be resolved so that everyone can get back to work.

Remarks in New Orleans, Louisiana

November 2, 1996

The President. Can you hear me in the back? [Applause] Wave your hands. Look back there. What a great crowd we have tonight. Thank you, New Orleans, for coming out. Thank you for your support. Thank you for the little song down here. Let's thank these fine young men who sang the national anthem again. They were great, the students who are here.

Reverend Morton, Mr. Mayor, thank you for making me feel so welcome here. Thank you for your exceptional leadership. Thank you for taking up for the children of New Orleans and trying to make them safer when the Sun goes down. I appreciate that.

My good friend Congressman Jefferson, thank you for being there with me in the dark days as well as the bright ones. Representative Cleo Fields, thank you for your service in the Congress, your support for me and Mary Landrieu and all of our other candidates. And thank you especially for going all over America to mobilize young people to vote to reelect Bill Clinton and Al Gore. Thank you, sir. My great friend John Breaux, to whom I owe so much—if you support John Breaux, as I think you do, you will elect Mary Landrieu just to keep a smile on John's face. I don't believe I could bear the thought of seeing what it's going to be like for John. [Laughter]

Ladies and gentlemen, I have come here tonight with a heart full of gratitude to all of you for giving me the chance to serve as President, for giving me the chance to do what has been done in the last 4 years, and to ask you

to keep America on the right track to the 21st century and to help me build that bridge that we can all walk across together. Will you do that? [Applause]

It is hard to believe, on the banks of this great river that has seen so much history, that the United States is about to elect the last President of the 20th century and the first President of the 21st century. But we are. We are about to do something even more important, for in this election and the race for the Senate and other races all across America we are going to decide just how we're going into that 21st century: whether there will be a bridge to the future or a bridge to the past; whether there will be a bridge that we all walk across together, where we try to help each other make the most of our own lives, or whether we'll say, "You're on your own"; whether we will rise up as one people seeking common ground, or whether we will give in to the old politics of division that has bedeviled people of Louisiana and Arkansas and our whole region for too long in the past.

Now, that is what is really at issue here. We know what works. Four years ago, everyone except the people in my own home State and the Louisianians that lived near the border took me on faith. I said we would create more opportunity and insist on more responsibility, that we'd pull closer together in an American community, and everybody would have a place and a role to play. But you took me on faith. Now we know what works.